

NEWS RELEASE

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BARRINGTON AREA MAYORS JOIN FORCES TO ENSURE THEIR COMMUNITIES DON'T GET RAILROADED BY CANADIAN NATIONAL'S ACQUISITION OF EJ&E RAIL LINE

(Barrington, IL) Canadian National's acquisition of the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway may be good news for its stockholders, but is bad news for the Barrington region. The railroad's announced plans to buy most of EJ&E include the line that goes right through the center of the Village of Barrington (see map attached). In response, the village presidents and township supervisors in the Greater Barrington Area have formed a coalition, the Barrington Communities Against CN Rail Congestion, to make sure their communities' interests are defended during the regulatory review process that precedes the acquisition.

The coalition recently sent a letter to all residents in the Greater Barrington Area alerting them to what the CN acquisition will mean for the region, which is expected to be the primary topic at the Barrington Village Board meeting on Monday, November 12, 2007, at 8:00 p.m., 200 S. Hough St. in Barrington.

"Barrington has always expected and required its corporate citizens to address any negative issues their business plans create for the community and its residents. We expect no less from CN," explains Karen Darch, Barrington Village president and spokesperson for the coalition.

According to CN's application, the company would use the acquired EJ&E railroad lines, including the segment that runs through Barrington, as a Chicago by-pass route for all current and future freight traffic from its Canadian and U.S. rail network. Thousands of cars per day would be moved from CN's current route in downtown Chicago to the line through Barrington.

CN also plans to use the EJ&E lines to make new connections with four other mega-rail companies, including the Union Pacific Railroad, which intersects with the EJ&E at several points. Perhaps most significantly, CN would use the acquired lines to re-route new and expanded traffic around Chicago for years and decades to come; and the growth in freight traffic that all Chicago area railroads will experience in the next 20 years is expected to be 80 percent.

The Village of Barrington is at "ground zero" in CN's Chicago by-pass plans. If unchecked, the CN acquisition would have a staggering adverse impact on Barrington and the surrounding communities that rely on Barrington for essential services.

CN ACQUISITION RESPONSE – 2

The U.S. Surface Transportation Board has authority to approve or disapprove the CN acquisition. While the STB has a mandate to approve the acquisition unless the agency finds it would reduce freight transportation competition, it also has a statutory duty to consider environmental impacts – which include traffic flow, grade crossing safety, noise and other issues – before the acquisition is approved. “CN’s Chicago by-pass would wreak havoc on traffic flow through the Barrington region, creating safety hazards at grade crossings and dramatically increasing Fire and EMS response times, train noise and noxious emissions from idling cars and trains,” explains Darch.

CN filed its application for approval of the acquisition on October 30. The coalition is studying it carefully to determine how the Greater Barrington Area will be affected. According to the application, Barrington will see more than 15 new trains per day, which could back up traffic for significant periods of time, given the average train takes six minutes to pass a crossing. Also, it only counts changes in traffic starting at the end of 2006 and moving forward three years – ignoring post-2006 new traffic and traffic from any new sources after three years.

CN is planning to route trainloads of new container traffic from the Port of Prince Rupert Container Terminal in British Columbia, around Chicago through Barrington to destinations in other parts of the U.S., but this impact is not included in its application.

“If left unchecked, the impact of the CN acquisition would be felt for years and decades to come,” explains Darch. “Consequently, a three-year analysis is woefully inadequate for purposes of measuring the environmental impact of the CN acquisition on the Barrington region.”

The coalition is galvanizing its efforts around the statement in the application made by Hunter Harrison, CN’s president and CEO, in which he states, “We are committed to working with the communities affected by the re-routed traffic to address their specific concerns.”

Darch says all of the Barrington area communities will be actively involved in the STB’s consideration of CN’s application to make sure the agency conducts a complete review, including the most comprehensive environmental review – an Environmental Impact Statement. Any approval of the CN acquisition must be contingent upon enforceable conditions to mitigate the adverse impact it will have on Barrington and the surrounding communities.

“We assume Mr. Harrison means what he says, and we are going to make sure that he stands by his words,” states Darch.

The coalition also plans to work closely with its elected federal and state representatives to protect the communities’ interests.

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